



Position Specification

Society for Science
Science News Media Group
Publisher

Our Client

For more than 100 years, the Society for Science (Society), has been a champion for science, dedicated to expanding scientific literacy, effective STEM education, and scientific research. Founded in 1921 by publishing magnate, E. W. Scripps and zoologist, William Ritter, the Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization focused on promoting the understanding and appreciation of science and the vital role it plays in human advancement: to inform, educate and inspire. The Society is best known for its award-winning magazine, *Science News*, world class science research competitions, and a suite of outreach and equity STEM programs.

Science News Media Group

Science News is one of the world's leading consumer science magazines. Our staff of beat reporters, many with Ph.D.s, are dedicated to identifying and reporting on the latest and most important published research across all fields of science. This allows a depth of coverage found in few other outlets. From cell biology to robotics, from climate change to quantum physics, *Science News* gives readers a sweeping view of the ever-shifting scientific landscape, putting individual discoveries in context and revealing connections between fields. We show how science can help people better understand major news, such as the war in Ukraine, and explore issues at the intersection of science and society, including how the lack of diversity in genomics databases hinders medical breakthroughs, and the persistent racial, ethnic and gender inequities in STEM.

Today, *Science News* has more than 120,000 print subscribers, more than 23 million unique website visitors and during the past year, 4.2 million Twitter followers and 2.6 million Facebook fans. In the past five years, we have undertaken multiple major growth initiatives, including redesigning and relaunching our websites on a WordPress platform; and developing a dedicated team to cover the coronavirus pandemic. To meet people's need for accurate information on the pandemic and to help combat disinformation, in 2020 we launched our "Coronavirus Update" newsletter. It includes both in-depth reviews of the latest science and evidence-based advice to help people make personal health decisions. Now in its third year, the award-winning newsletter reaches thousands of people, and has inspired major donations. We also are sharing our COVID coverage with local nonprofit news organizations who don't have science journalists on staff, and engaging readers in discussions on big ethical questions posed by advances in neuroscience and genetics.

We have built a diversified revenue model for Science News Media Group, which includes print and digital subscriptions, advertising, licensing, memberships, and philanthropy—foundation, corporate, and individual donors. We will continue to expand revenue opportunities to support our mission.

Science News Media Group's publishing operations include the following other products;

1. *Science News for Students*, launched in 2003, is an award-winning free digital resource serving middle school students, as well as their parents and teachers. *Science News for Students* connects young people to the latest developments in scientific research through more than 300 articles per year. No other news site publishes such timely science and engineering journalism targeted to a youth audience, with reporting and editing by professional science journalists. *Science News for Students* articles have won major writing awards and are regularly licensed for classroom use in countries around the world. The site drew more than 11 million unique visitors in the past year, and more than 1 million Facebook fans.

2. *Science News Explores* is a new consumer print publication, building on the award-winning journalism of *Science News* and *Science News for Students*. It launched in May 2022 with lively, accessible articles, inviting visual design, experiments, puzzles and games designed to enchant readers ages 9 and up and their families. We created this publication to address the lack of high-quality, age-appropriate science journalism for this demographic. Parents prefer print over digital content for their children and teens and reading in print improves comprehension and retention. In addition, educators often struggle to find quality nonfiction writing to inspire STEM classrooms, and internet access at home or at school is not always a given. *Science News Explores* leverages the depth and value of our existing content and provides a pathway for readers to “grow into” *Science News*, creating lifelong relationships. To strengthen the brand, we will rebrand the *Science News for Students* website as *Science News Explores* in Q3 2022.
3. *Science News* in High Schools connects more than 5 million high school students at 5,474 schools in all 50 states, D.C. and the U.S. territories with current news on science in action, providing both information and inspiration. Sponsored schools receive 10 print copies of each issue of the magazine during the academic year, as well as online Educator Guides and digital access to the full *Science News* and *Science News for Students* archive.
4. Special projects and initiatives: To celebrate its centennial, *Science News* launched a major new digital project, *Century of Science*, which connects the events of the past to the events of today through in-depth original reporting on the scientific discoveries that have changed history, including quantum mechanics, the atom bomb, the invention of plastics and other new materials, and climate science. The effort was supported by generous funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Heising-Simons Foundation, The Kavli Foundation, and others. Centennial efforts also included an in-depth history of *Science News*, and an examination of where we went wrong in our past coverage, including articles that were racist, sexist, and discriminatory. We also held a virtual symposium, Science News Now, in December 2021, featuring *Science News* journalists and world-renowned scientists explaining hot topics including the pandemic, climate communications, stress and resilience, and black holes. We are expanding our “SN 10: Scientists to Watch” franchise, which honors rising stars in early-career research, by broadening the nominee pool. This will allow us to reflect the increasing diversity and solutions-oriented focus of this rising generation of science leaders.
5. New products: In 2021, we joined the Civic Science Fellows program to research how we use science journalism to connect with young people in underrepresented groups and underserved communities and developed and tested a news product focused on these groups. We are testing TikTok to expand the reach to adult and student audiences and we are developing new products designed to serve our enthusiastic audience for news of physics and astronomy. Our rich history and current growth have us well positioned to grow and thrive as a multimodal news organization for the 21st century.
6. With support from our board, Science News Media Group will undertake a strategic planning process in 2022 with the goal of aligning editorial and business goals and charting a path for growth and innovation.

To learn more about the Society, please visit <https://www.societyforscience.org/>. For more information about *Science News*, please visit: <https://www.sciencenews.org/>.

The Role

The Publisher of Science News Media Group is the senior executive responsible for the leadership of a multiplatform publishing business strategy and its operations. The Publisher is a critical member of the executive leadership team and will contribute to a culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration.

The Publisher reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Publisher, *Science News* and will join a group of creative, inquisitive, ambitious, and entrepreneurial people who come to science journalism from a diversity of backgrounds, education and experiences, and who are passionate about our work as independent non-profit journalists.

This strategic thinker and proven leader with experience owning a P&L, effectively responding to market challenges, and cultivating a collaborative organizational culture will oversee the business side for two print magazines, two consumer websites and other digital products. Specific areas of responsibility to include print circulation, subscriber acquisition and management, advertising, licensing and royalties as well as new business development.

The Publisher upholds the high ethical and journalistic standards and public service mission of *Science News* and the Society, which for more than 100 years has delivered unbiased, fiercely accurate journalism on science and technology. Today, science and journalism have never been more important, or more under threat. We believe in the power of science to transform lives and advance civilization and the crucial role that journalism and public understanding of science play in building a better world.

Primary Responsibilities

Strategic and Organizational Leadership

- Serve as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to organizational strategy and supporting informed institutional decision-making and participate actively in all strategic planning committees;
- Bring strategic, visionary, and collaborative thinking to publishing business operations, and develop and implement innovative, financially sound strategic initiatives in direct support of Society's and *Science News*' mission, goals, and objectives;
- Interact with senior managers to provide CEO and the Board with information, analyses, reports, and recommendations, and present this information as required;
- Advance the Society's and Science News Media Group's goals in ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace, in our vendor relationships, and in our news coverage;
- Advocate for the role of a free, fair, and unfettered press in providing access to accurate, unbiased information, in order to support a more informed and engaged public and enable a thriving democracy.

Science News Media Group Business Operations

- Work collaboratively with Science News Media Group Editor in Chief and staff to gain insight into our audiences, create new options for reader engagement, constantly improve lead generation and conversion rates, and grow direct revenue in both print and digital;
- Oversee and supervise print magazine circulation operations including management of key vendor relationships with our magazine consultant, fulfillment house and printer;
- Oversee and supervise the engagement and growth of a dynamic digital audience for all of the Science News Media Group online entities;
- Manage direct mail and digital marketing for subscription sales, including social media campaigns;
- Collaborate with editorial, education programs, and advancement teams to build on successful strategies to bring *Science News* content to educators and grow philanthropic support;
- Grow direct revenue via the *Science News* and *Science News Explores* websites by developing new advertising options, improving subscriber lead generation, and increasing direct subscription sales via paywall experimentation and other strategies;
- Manage print and digital advertising sales including supervision of one senior sales manager;
- Introduce a business development approach to licensing, permissions and royalties revenue and oversee existing operations;
- Represent the interests and needs of *Science News* and *Science News Explores* in a multi-year data infrastructure improvement project kicking off in Q2 2022.

Team Leadership

- Hire, train, motivate, and manage best-in-class individuals;
- Drive a culture of success built on collective performance and personal accountability, with a commitment to working collaboratively and cross-functionally;
- Supervise and mentor all staff within the *Science News* business team and ensure effective performance metrics are set for each member of the department with consistent communication and open dialogue around achievement against these metrics.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree in business administration, management or relevant degree strongly preferred;
- A strong track record in media business operations, marketing and sales management experience resulting in demonstrable success. Experience in digital and print publishing for consumer markets required;
- Knowledge and experience in the development of budgets, as well as experience in managing spending;
- Strong interpersonal skills, as well as verbal and written skills emphasizing clear, concise communications of complex concepts, including presiding over and facilitating group meetings.

Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will have the following characteristics:

- Commitment to advancing independent journalism and enthusiasm for continuing our mission to provide the public with accurate coverage of key issues in science, medicine, and technology, including their impact on society;
- An entrepreneurial and enterprising approach to business development and growth, including effectively responding to marketing challenges;
- Confident, inclusive manager recognized for galvanizing talented teams to achieve ambitious goals;
- Seasoned and mature leader with substantive experience creating bold business strategies grounded in deep market knowledge;
- Track record of success in publishing business operations including setting -- and achieving -- ambitious targets for audience growth (print circulation and digital footprint), advertising and sponsorship sales, and licensing and royalties profitability;
- Skilled at managing change across strategies, processes and organizational culture, including guiding complex projects to fulfil crucial business objectives;
- Hands-on, proactive, and engaged partner to the CEO and other leaders who has contributed significantly to the strategic dialogue of a significant organization or division;
- Comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, able to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex situations;
- Experience presenting to a Board in a clear and concise style; comfortable answering probing questions and making thoughtful suggestions;
- Experience leveraging data and systems to provide insights and drive efficiencies and innovation across an organization;
- Comfortable in an interdisciplinary and high-performing environment that reflects the Society's professionalism, growing media platforms, and standing in the scientific community;
- Able to forge and maintain collaborative relationships with the Board and the CEO, as well as with the editorial team, and create a positive and inclusive environment;
- Well versed in media law and dedicated to upholding and defending the integrity and editorial independence of *Science News* journalism;
- A detail oriented leader who easily develops trust with executive peers, journalists, Board, staff, and external partners;
- Above all, the Publisher will have unquestioned integrity and a genuine commitment to the Society's and *Science News*' mission and values.

Contact

Kindly direct all inquiries, expressions of interest, applications, and nominations to:
SocietyforScience_Publisher@russellreynolds.com